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LETTER DATED 22 FEBRUARY 1996 FROM THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Further to my letter of 28 March 1994 (S/1994/351) and on instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you and the members of the Security Council of recent developments in the dispute between my country, Cameroon, and Nigeria concerning the Bakassi Peninsula.

In this connection, I should like to recall that in March 1994, Cameroon referred this border and territorial dispute to the International Court of Justice.

At the very time when this case is pending before the Court, since 3 February 1996 Nigerian troops have been advancing further into Cameroonian territory and launching artillery attacks on Cameroonian positions, causing loss of human life and considerable material damage.

Given the seriousness of this situation, the prolongation of which could threaten the maintenance of international peace and security in the region, I request the Security Council to urge Nigeria to withdraw to the territorial positions which it occupied prior to its 21 December 1993 military aggression.

I should be grateful if, in conformity with the letter dated 29 April 1994 (S/1994/519) addressed to the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria by the President of the Security Council, you would invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations to report to the Security Council on the overall situation and the latest serious incidents in the Bakassi Peninsula.

I should also be grateful if you would have the text of this letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ferdinand Leopold OYONO

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Annex I

Letter dated 28 January 1996 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cameroon addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria

NOTE OF PROTEST

Following my meeting with the High Commissioner of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at Yaoundé on 4 February 1996, at which I lodged the vigorous protest of the Government of the Republic of Cameroon at the attack launched on 3 February 1996 by your country's military forces, from the Cameroonian territory which they have been occupying since December 1993, against the Cameroonian armed forces based in the Bakassi Peninsula, I have the honour to inform you of the following:

By engaging, on 17 February 1996, in a further military attack on my country, the Nigerian Government has, for the fourth consecutive time, taken upon itself, in defiance of its international obligations, the heavy responsibility of pursuing hostilities against the Cameroonian army in the Bakassi Peninsula. In so doing, it has also:

1. Ignored the appeals for peace launched since 1994 by numerous States, the United Nations Security Council and the Organization of African Unity, calling on Cameroon and Nigeria to refrain from the threat and use of force as means of settling the border and territorial dispute between them in the Bakassi Peninsula.

2. Broken the commitments to a cessation of military hostilities entered into by our two countries in the joint communiqués signed on 7 July 1994 and 17 February 1996 at Kara, Togo, under the sponsorship of President Gnasingbe Eyadema, Togo's Head of State.

There is no longer any doubt that, by its repetition of this belligerent behaviour, Nigeria means to disrupt consideration by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) of this territorial and border dispute, which has been referred to it for a legal ruling.

The Government of the Republic of Cameroon once again lodges officially and formally a vigorous protest against these acts of aggression, which pose a real threat to the civilian population of the Bakassi region and to the maintenance of good neighbourly relations and the prolongation of which seriously threatens the maintenance of peace and security in the subregion. At the same time, it calls on the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to heed the voice of wisdom, which counsels the withdrawal of troops from the Bakassi Peninsula and the return of the civilian populations displaced from this area, pending completion of the process of judicial settlement set in motion at the International Court of Justice.

In this connection, I reaffirm here the willingness of the Government of Cameroon to work for the maintenance of peace in the Bakassi Peninsula, while

awaiting the judgement of the International Court of Justice, in keeping with the spirit of the Tunis and Kara (Togo) agreements.

Moreover, bearing in mind the loss of civilian lives caused in these attacks by Nigerian troops against the Cameroonian army and the serious risks faced by the civilian population not only of a repetition of such attacks but also of an increase in military tensions, and concerned to protect the lives of this population, the Government of the Republic of Cameroon informs the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that it has decided to henceforth prohibit all fishing activity in this area of military hostilities, pending completion of the negotiations under way at Kara, Togo, to secure peace in this region, without prejudice to the action taken before ICJ.

Lastly, the Government of the Republic of Cameroon reaffirms its determination to pursue a peaceful judicial settlement of this dispute, as the only lasting guarantee of peace and security between the two countries.

(Signed) Ferdinand Leopold OYONO

Annex II

Statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon concerning the Bakassi Peninsula

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The European Union, deeply concerned at the repetition of incidents which threaten domestic peace and regional stability in Africa and at border disputes which could open the door to innumerable territorial claims, deplores the use of military force by the parties concerned and expresses its concern at the conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon over the Bakassi Peninsula and at the signs of a further military confrontation, perceptible since 3 February 1996.

The Union calls on the parties to the dispute to refrain from any military intervention, in conformity with international law and, in particular, with the Charter of the United Nations, and expresses the hope that a peaceful solution will be found to this conflict through its referral to the International Court of Justice.

The European Union requests the parties to return to the positions which they occupied before the dispute was referred to the International Court of Justice.